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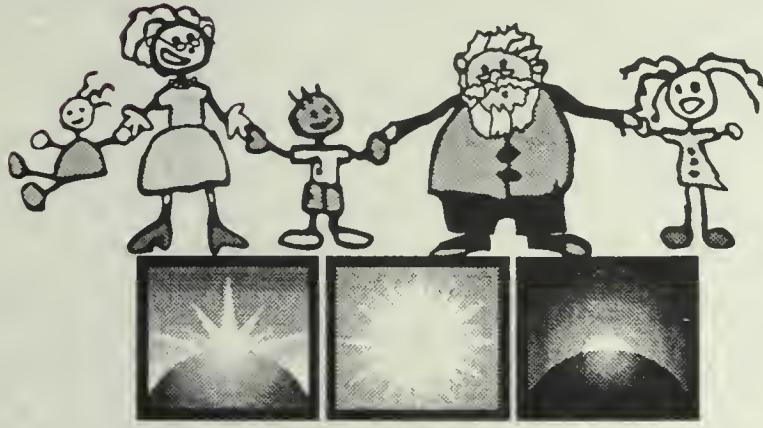
Intergenerational Programs

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Building a Bridge
Across the Generations

Resources, Training and
Technical Assistance
from the



ILLINOIS
Department
on Aging

George H. Ryan
Governor

Margo E. Schreiber
Director

Intergenerational Programs



... are rooted in the spirit of volunteerism, where older people give their time to help a child in his or her development both in life and as a student.

Senior volunteers in schools play an important role in the lives of children. Any time a caring adult is involved one-on-one with a child, the chances for that child to succeed improve.

Contact the Illinois Department on Aging for information on starting an intergenerational program in your community.

What are intergenerational programs?

Intergenerational programs bring together individuals from different generations to work in mutually beneficial activities. Perhaps seniors read to a small group of children, listen to children read or practice flash card skills. Perhaps young members of a T-Ball team or soccer team adopt an older adult residential facility and develop meaningful relationships through service projects or pen-pal programs. Perhaps seniors are "Storytellers" at a local library during the summer.

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Older adults and high school students can enjoy planning and initiating a joint Senior Prom or community beautification project. Whatever the community or school needs, programs are enriched by generations coming together to contribute and learn from each other. Everyone benefits. Intergenerational programs rely on the experiences and skills of older adults to stimulate students, while encouraging motivation and enthusiasm toward learning. At the same time, older adults feel needed and productive. It enhances their lives.

Program Development

Intergenerational programs are supported by the Illinois Department on Aging through training opportunities and resources, and are developed and managed locally by project coordinators. Each program must be based on the determined need of the community, have an identity that is meaningful to that community and operated in a manner that is most efficient and effective for that community. Resources, technical assistance and training are available to help in program development through the Department.

How can I get involved?

There are a number of ways to become involved with intergenerational programs. You may choose to take a leadership role or simply offer your services as a volunteer.

The Local Project Coordinator

- initiates the program locally
- coordinates sites and volunteers
- provides local leadership

The Volunteer Coordinator

- recruits volunteers
- is the main contact for volunteers
- promotes the program among potential volunteer groups

The Site Coordinator

- is the main contact for agency staff
- helps match volunteers with staff
- promotes intergenerational program interest in the agency

The Volunteers

- donate time fitting their schedule
- provide caring, patience and interest in another generation
- honor the need for confidentiality

What types of activities are there for volunteers?

Activities are limited only by the imagination of the volunteers, staff, administrators and coordinators.

Programs occur before school, after school, during school and over time for specific goals such as a pen-pal program or gardening project.

Examples are:

- helping in the school or community library
- storytelling
- tutoring
- sharing travel experiences
- introducing a craft, skill or hobby
- relating participation in an historical event

- talking about job and life experiences
- assisting in music or art
- developing a butterfly garden
- running errands for an elderly person
- raking leaves or trimming hedges
- helping with science experiments

There are many benefits

- For youth and children: Students receive individualized attention and unconditional acceptance from volunteers who help them learn. Youth and children also have an opportunity to acquire a positive attitude toward older people and insight into the aging process.
- For volunteers: Volunteers have an opportunity to share their skills and expertise, interact with the staff and volunteers of local agencies and gain a feeling of accomplishment. Volunteers also build new rewarding friendships with young people.
- For staff: Teachers, librarians and residential staff gain access to experiences and resources that enhance effectiveness and enrich the overall curriculum or program activities. Senior volunteers often improve student achievement and attitude, provide insight into individual behavior and needs, and perform non-teaching tasks.

When can programs take place?

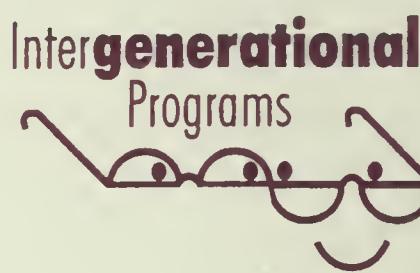
Intergenerational programs can become a reality in your agency or

community right now! The Illinois Department on Aging can provide program development resources that outline suggested procedures for starting a program. The Department is also prepared to work with groups of interested individuals from a site or community. Training is offered and speakers are available throughout the year. Networks, organizations and individuals who support program development are available through the Illinois Department on Aging.

For further information

regarding Intergenerational Program development, call the Illinois Department on Aging's toll-free **Senior HelpLine:**

1-800-252-8966 (Voice & TTY).



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World Wide Web: <http://www.state.il.us/aging/>

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